

In the Claims

1. (Original) A locking assembly adapted for locking first and second members together, said assembly comprising:

a housing member having a through hole formed therethrough, said through hole having an insertion end and an exit end;

a retention member disposed in said through hole; and

a stud member including a head portion and a shank portion joined by a separable portion, said shank portion being received in said through hole through said insertion end and engaging said retention member to prevent removal of said shank portion from said through hole through said insertion end, wherein with said first and second members disposed between said housing member body portion and said stud member head portion, upon breaking of said separable portion, said head portion separates from said shank portion to allow separation of said first and second members and removal of said shank portion from said through hole through said exit end.

2. (Original) The locking assembly as in claim 1, in which said retention member is a snap ring disposed in a groove formed in an inside wall of said through hole, and said shank portion includes a circumferential groove adapted to receive said snap ring to prevent removal of said shank portion from said through hole through said insertion end.

3. (Original) The locking assembly as in claim 1, in which a seal is fixed over said head portion, such that said seal is permanently deformed upon breaking said head portion away from said shank portion.

4. (Original) The locking assembly as in claim 3, in which said seal displays indicia.

5. (Original) The locking assembly as in claim 3, in which said seal includes a tab.

6. (Original) The locking assembly as in claim 3, in which a retaining ring engages said head portion, and said seal is secured over said head portion by a retainer engaging said retaining ring.

7. (Original) The locking assembly as in claim 3, in which a retaining ring engages said head portion, and said seal is secured over said head portion by said retaining ring.

8. (Original) The locking assembly as in claim 3, in which a label is interposed between said seal and said head portion.

9. (Original) The locking assembly as in claim 1, including a ring member having a ring axis and adapted to fit about a cover portion of a meter, said ring member having first and second ends, said first member extending from said first ring member end includes a first leg with a first hole formed therethrough, and said second member extending from said second ring member end includes a second leg with a second hole formed therethrough, said first and second legs extending generally parallel to each other in an overlapping relation, such that said first and second holes are aligned, and at least one of said housing member and said stud member extends through at least one of said first and second holes, wherein said aligned first and second holes have axes substantially parallel to said ring axis.

10. (Original) The locking assembly as in claim 9, in which said housing member is fixed to said first leg through said first hole.

11. (Original) The locking assembly as in claim 10 in which said housing member is received in said second hole formed in said second leg to maintain said holes in an aligned relationship.

12. (Original) The locking assembly as in claim 9, in which distal ends of said first and second legs are shaped to expose engagement surfaces of said first and second legs for separating said first and second legs.

13. (Original) The locking assembly as in claim 1 in which said housing member body portion includes a flange portion extending radially outwardly from the remainder of said body portion.

14. (Currently Amended) A locking assembly adapted for locking first and second members together, said assembly comprising:

a housing member having a body portion with an opening formed therein defined by an inside wall and having an insertion end;

a retention member disposed in said ~~through hole~~opening;

a stud member comprising a shank portion and a head portion joined by a separable portion, said shank portion being received in said opening through said insertion end, and engaging said retention member to prevent said stud member shank portion from passing out of said opening through said insertion end, wherein with said first and second members disposed between said housing member body portion and said stud member head portion, upon breaking of said separable portion, said head portion separates from said shank portion to allow separation of said first and second members; and

a seal covering said head portion, such that said seal is permanently deformed upon breaking of said separable portion.

15. (Original) The locking assembly as in claim 14 in which said opening is a through hole formed through said body portion, and said stud member shank portion passes out of said through hole through an exit end upon breaking of said separable portion.

16. (Original) The locking assembly as in claim 14, in which said seal displays indicia.

17. (Original) The locking assembly as in claim 14, in which said seal includes a tab.

18. (Original) The locking assembly as in claim 14, in which a retaining ring engages said head portion, and said seal is secured over said head portion by a retainer engaging said retaining ring.

19. (Original) The locking assembly as in claim 14, in which a retaining ring engages said head portion, and said seal is secured over said head portion by said retaining ring.

20. (Original) The locking assembly as in claim 14, in which a label is interposed between said seal and said head portion.

21. (Original) The locking assembly as in claim 14, including a ring member having a ring axis and adapted to fit about a cover portion of a meter, said ring member having first and second ends, said first member extending from said first ring member end includes a first leg with a first hole formed therethrough, and said second member extending from said second ring member end includes a second leg with a second hole formed therethrough, said first and second legs extending generally parallel to each other in an overlapping relation, such that said first and second holes are aligned, and at least one of said housing member and said stud member extends through at least one of said first and second holes, wherein said aligned first and second holes have axes substantially parallel to said ring axis.

22. (Original) The locking assembly as in claim 21, in which said housing member is fixed to said first leg through said first hole.

23. (Original) The locking assembly as in claim 22 in which said housing member is received in said second hole formed in said second leg to maintain said holes in an aligned relationship.

24. (Original) The locking assembly as in claim 21, in which distal ends of said first and second legs are shaped to expose engagement surfaces of said first and second legs for separating said first and second legs.

25. (Original) The locking assembly as in claim 14 in which said housing member body portion includes a flange portion extending radially outwardly from the remainder of said body portion.

26. (Original) The locking assembly as in claim 14, in which said retention member is a snap ring disposed in a groove formed in said inside wall, and said shank portion includes a circumferential groove adapted to receive said snap ring to prevent removal of said shank portion from said through hole through said insertion end.

27. (Original) A locking assembly comprising:

a ring member having a ring axis and adapted to fit about a cover portion of a meter, said ring member having first and second ends, a first member extending from said first ring member end including a leg with a first hole formed therethrough, and a second member extending from said second ring member end including a second leg with a second hole formed therethrough, said first and second legs extending generally parallel to each other in an overlapping arrangement, such that said first and second holes are aligned and have axes substantially parallel to said ring axis;

a stud member including a shank portion and a head portion joined by a separable portion; and

a housing member including a body portion having an opening defined by an inside wall with an insertion end adapted to receive said stud member shank portion and prevent removal of said shank portion from said opening through said insertion end, wherein at least one of said housing member and said stud member extending through at least one of said first and second holes with said first and second legs locked between said housing member body portion and said stud member head portion, and said head portion is presented for engagement by a user to break said separable portion and separate said head portion from said shank portion.

28. (Original) The locking assembly as in claim 27, in which a groove is formed in the inside wall of said opening, a snap ring is disposed in said groove, and said shank portion has a groove adapted to receive said snap ring to lock said housing member and said stud member together.



29. (Original) The locking assembly as in claim 27, in which said opening is a through hole formed through said body portion, and said stud member shank portion passes out of said through hole through an exit end upon breaking of said separable portion.

30. (Original) The locking assembly as in claim 27, in which a seal is fixed over said head portion, such that said seal is permanently deformed upon breaking said head portion away from said shank portion.

31. (Original) The locking assembly as in claim 30, in which said seal displays indicia.

32. (Original) The locking assembly as in claim 30, in which said seal includes a tab.

33. (Original) The locking assembly as in claim 30, in which a retaining ring engages said head portion, and said seal is secured over said head portion by a retainer engaging said retaining ring.

34. (Original) The locking assembly as in claim 30, in which a retaining ring engages said head portion, and said seal is secured over said head portion by said retaining ring.

35. (Original) The locking assembly as in claim 30, in which a label is interposed between said seal and said head portion.

36. (Original) The locking assembly as in claim 27, in which said housing member is fixed to said first leg through said first hole.

37. (Original) The locking assembly as in claim 36 in which said housing member is received in said second hole formed in said second leg to maintain said holes in an aligned relationship.

38. (Original) The locking assembly as in claim 27, in which distal ends of said first and second legs are shaped to expose engagement surfaces of said first and second legs for separating said first and second legs.

39. (Original) The locking assembly as in claim 27 in which said housing member body portion includes a flange portion extending radially outwardly from the remainder of said body portion.